



THE CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION'S PUBLIC AGENDA: PRIORITIES FOR ACTION



APRIL 2002

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

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COMMISSION REPORT 02-5

Summary

Beginning in the spring of 2001, the California Postsecondary Education Commission initiated a series of endeavors, including both internal discussions and dialogues with others in higher education and beyond, about the changing educational needs of the 21st century and to clarify the Commission's role and responsibilities as California's higher education planning and coordinating agency. Additionally, over the course of the year, the Commission began examining data and identifying critical issues facing higher education in California in order to set forth Commission priority activities.

This *Public Agenda* is the result of these discussions and activities. It is designed to better address the educational needs of a growing and diverse California population. It outlines and describes the Commission's roles and responsibilities and sets forth its priority activities. In addition to recurring responsibilities, these priority activities fall under the four thematic areas identified by the Commission: (1) Growth and Access; (2) Preparation for Postsecondary Education; (3) Baccalaureate Degree Attainment; and (4) Workforce Preparation /Economic Development.

This document was presented for Commission discussion at its February 2002 meeting and was adopted by the Commission in April 2002. It will serve to guide the Commission's efforts over the course of the coming years. The development and implementation of the Commission's *Public Agenda* will assist the State in identifying policy changes and investments to ensure that *all* Californians have the opportunity to achieve their educational goals and to secure California's economic and social future.

This report has been added to the Commission's Internet website -- www.cpec.ca.gov -- and is now electronically accessible to the general public. Additional copies of this and other Commission reports may also be obtained by e-mail at PublicationRequest@cpec.ca.gov; or by writing the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, Ca. 95814-2938; or by telephone at (916) 322-9268.

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CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION
1303 J Street ♦ Suite 500 ♦ Sacramento, California 95814-2938



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Introduction: The California Postsecondary Education Commission's Public Agenda

This document describes the California Postsecondary Education Commission's public agenda and planning goals for the coming years. It summarizes the Commission's discussions concerning its priorities for the future of California higher education and the responsibilities and activities of the Commission to assist the State.

The Commission's statutory charge and guiding principles

The California Postsecondary Education Commission is approaching its third decade of service to the State and its residents. Assembly Bill 770 (Chapter 1187, Statutes of 1973) established the Commission and codified its mission as:

... the statewide postsecondary education planning and coordinating agency and adviser to the Legislature and Governor ... to assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs through planning and coordination (*Education Code Section 66900*).

The Commission understands that good policy is derived from rigorous and non-partisan analyses of issues and the strengths and weaknesses of various options and alternatives.

The Commission functions under a set of principles, or guidelines, that serve to establish its priorities and focus its efforts. The core values of these principles is set forth below:

- ◆ The Commission is a consistent advocate for postsecondary education but also an informed and independent critic of it. Although the Commission seeks to achieve consensus among all parties before providing advice to the Office of the Governor and Legislature, it can and does reach conclusions and provide advice to policy makers on issues where consensus is not reached, particularly when it believes that it is in the best interest of the State, its citizens, and postsecondary education students for it to do so.
- ◆ The Commission understands that good policy is derived from rigorous and non-partisan analyses of issues and the strengths and weaknesses of various options and alternatives. To that end, the Commission views one of its primary responsibilities as providing advice based upon sound and thoughtful analyses to the executive and legislative branches, the educational sectors, and the public.
- ◆ The promise of the Master Plan for Higher Education can be realized only if there is reasonable balance among the different missions and functions of the higher educational sectors. Absent that balance and

absent a fully coordinated system of postsecondary education, the promise of differentiation of function and quality in all sectors is likely to fail.

- ◆ The Commission's priorities are to improve the use of resources, to enhance coordination between the sectors of postsecondary education, to encourage educational sectors and institutions to be more accountable, and to provide increased service to students and the State.
- ◆ The Commission has taken the lead in crafting State policy on issues of educational equity. That priority is motivated not only by the statutory charge to the Commission, but emanates from its analysis of anticipated demographic -- and thus educational policy -- changes facing California.
- ◆ All Commission information is made available upon request to the public at little or no cost to the consumer. Information is provided through traditional and technology-assisted means. The Commission's website has proven an exceptionally useful and popular tool for many to obtain access to the Commission's extensive database as well as reports and policy recommendations.

**Establishing the
Commission's
Public Agenda**

At the June 2001 Postsecondary Education Commission meeting, members of the Commission's Executive Committee expressed the desire to bring together the members of the Commission to discuss the future direction of higher education in California and the Commission. On November 2-3, 2001, that meeting was held in San Diego, California. Participants included members of the Commission, the Commission's executive director, deputy director, and the Commission's consultants, Jerry Hayward of Management Analysis and Planning, Inc., and Dennis Jones and Aims McGuinness of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS).

The workshop served several purposes:

- ◆ It provided members of the Commission with the opportunity to discuss and better understand its role as the planning and coordinating agency for higher education in California in light of 21st century needs. Commission consultants Dennis Jones and Aims McGuinness facilitated discussion of important higher education issues in California and provided guidance as the Commission worked toward defining a "public agenda" for the future.
- ◆ It provided the members of the Commission with the opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of the Commission with its independent evaluator, Jerry Hayward, of Management Analysis and Planning, Inc. Over the past year, Mr. Hayward had been retained by the Commission to gather information from Commission members and a variety of internal and external stakeholders, to provide commission-

ers with feedback and analysis, and to make suggestions to guide its future work.

- ◆ The workshop provided an opportunity to discuss the public trust and stewardship roles and responsibilities of the Postsecondary Education Commission, including a differentiation between the roles of the Commission members and its staff. In addition, it fostered a dialogue about the Commission's role within the State government structure, the higher education community, the cadre of policymakers and administrators, and all those who act as advocates for and critics of higher education.
- ◆ The workshop provided an opportunity for the Commission to begin the process of setting its future priorities. It was not intended as a comprehensive review of all of the issues raised by the Commission. It is anticipated that the Commission will continue the discussion of its priorities during subsequent meetings.

Workshop participants discussed how the role of a statewide coordinating body such as the Commission has shifted in recent years. The consultants urged the Commission to focus its future efforts around the development of a public agenda for California.

Workshop participants discussed how the role of a statewide coordinating body such as the Commission has shifted in recent years. The consultants urged the Commission to focus its future efforts around the development of a public agenda for California.

In developing its public agenda, the Commission recognized the need to consider the following:

- ◆ The overall needs of the State, not those of particular higher education institutions or systems.
- ◆ The needs of students or clients with a particular emphasis on all Californians. Narrowing the disparities in access and opportunity across all regions of California is one example of the manner in which a public agenda might be implemented.
- ◆ The goals or outcomes to be achieved, including their implications for policy, financing, and success. It includes measuring progress towards those goals, rather than the specific means to achieve these goals.
- ◆ Goals and strategies that are appropriate for its unique position. That is, it should: (1) focus on all of California; (2) be directed across all segments and sectors (public, independent, for profit, distance delivery, etc.); (3) cut across all levels of education; and (4) link with both the executive and legislative branches of government as well as with its stakeholders.
- ◆ A framework for existing Commission priorities and analytic strengths.
- ◆ A venue for strategic collaboration among existing initiatives rather than duplicating other efforts.

- ◆ The Commission's policy leadership and analysis role, such as setting an agenda, establishing the information base and analytic foundation for defining and measuring progress, providing analysis and policy recommendations.

**The four themes of
the Commission's
Public Agenda**

At the workshop, the Commission examined and discussed a variety of data relating to the educational needs of California. Based upon that examination, it recognized four broad thematic or focus areas that are critical to the future of California and its citizens. These four areas include: (1) Growth and Access; (2) Preparation for Postsecondary Education; (3) Baccalaureate Degree Production; and (4) Workforce Preparation and Economic Development. Data supporting the Commission's selection of these four themes to guide its work will soon be available on the Commission's website. Presented below are some of the compelling issues in each of these thematic areas:

- ◆ ***Growth and Access.*** This theme emphasizes the importance of access to postsecondary education for all of California's diverse and growing population. The Commission expressed concern that postsecondary education should serve the needs of all Californians, not simply a portion of them. The State can expect an enrollment demand increase or growth between 1998 and 2010 of over 714,000 new students in its public colleges and universities and up to 65,000 in the independent college and university sector. However, this growth occurs differentially as do educational opportunities. Focus on this area would make explicit the need to eliminate disparities in access to postsecondary education across all dimensions of California's populations, such as race, ethnicity, and place of residence. It includes a variety of strategies such as improving transfer and participation rates.
- ◆ ***Preparation for Postsecondary Education.*** This theme places emphasis on the need to ensure that all of Californians ought to complete secondary education and obtain the core competencies necessary to succeed in the workforce, in postsecondary education, and pursue life-long learning. The Commission recognizes that the State should have policies and programs that ensure that all Californians have access to educational opportunity that will mitigate differences in background and maximize an individual's ability to realize his or her highest potential. This responsibility lies with K-12 education as well as higher education. Institutions of higher education should work with elementary and secondary schools in encouraging all students, regardless of whether they choose a traditional university experience or vocational training, to prepare for living productive lives and contributing to the economic vigor and cultural enhancement of California.
- ◆ ***Baccalaureate Degree Production.*** This thematic area responds to the issue of whether or not California should produce more holders of bachelor degrees. The current production of institutions of higher education is lower than the national average, but California attracts

many bachelor degree holders from outside the state who move here to live and work. This theme may include a statewide goal to raise baccalaureate degree production to the level of the best performing states or higher. As with the other three thematic areas, it incorporates the elimination of disparities by race/ethnicity and region in this regard.

- ◆ ***Workforce Preparation/Economic Development.*** This includes improving the linkages between education and the needs of the new economy. This area recognizes the growing importance of the need for students to acquire stronger academic skills and increased workforce competencies. In addition, the Postsecondary Education Commission recognizes the importance of improving adult literacy in California as a necessary component to achieving greater participation by all in the new economy and to facilitate and strengthen the capacity of parents to raise expectations for children's education and postsecondary participation.

Integral to these four themes, consideration should be given to addressing policy barriers that might stand in the way of achieving success. Furthermore, the Commission should establish a vision for California and establish specific benchmarks by which progress can be monitored, in each of these four thematic areas.

Advancing the Public Agenda

The Commission, as has been its long-standing tradition, is concerned not only that the information and policy recommendations advanced are of high quality and substance but that they employ strategies that will ensure greater opportunity to affect change.

The *Public Agenda* identified by the Postsecondary Education Commission includes higher education issues seen as critical to California's future. Over the next year, the Commission and its staff will pursue this agenda in an effort to provide solid evidence and data to inform our understanding on these issues as well as guidance to the California policy makers.

The Commission, as has been its long-standing tradition, is concerned not only that the information and policy recommendations advanced are of high quality and substance but that they employ strategies that will ensure greater opportunity to affect change. Over the last 25 years, the Commission has relied on the power of persuasion along with sound data, analysis and advocacy work to advance its vision for the State.

Those traditional Commission efforts often met with great success, particularly in the areas of expanding educational access and in forecasting historical growth in enrollment demand. However, given the realities of California's current political environment, characterized by term limits and powerful interest groups to name just two factors, excellent policy work based on accurate and reliable data must be also accompanied by focused advocacy.

The Commission recognizes that multiple strategies must be employed in the future in order to maximize the impact the Commission will have on educational policy in California. The Commission and its staff currently

use some of these strategies; others will be new and untested by the Commission. Nevertheless, the intended purpose of these strategies will be the same -- as the Commission becomes more actively engaged in the outcome of higher education policymaking focusing on students and their achievement, then it must increase its visibility and impact on others engaged in these discussions and those who are, in fact, empowered to make decisions.

A key element in the implementation of the Commission's *Public Agenda* will be to work more closely with a wider group of stakeholders, to collaborate and cooperate with those outside the Commission's historical circle of influence. Effective implementation of the *Public Agenda* will require that the Commission partner with others, increase its network of influence, and leverage the resources that exist in the larger community.

For instance, the Commission has routinely worked effectively with staff within each of the systems of higher education as well as legislators and their staffs within the Capitol building. It has not, however, worked significantly with members of the business community or community based organizations, both of which are involved in efforts to improve education opportunities for California's citizens. While the Commission has long recognized the need and benefits of doing so, such a strategy has not been integral to the Commission focus. As this *Public Agenda* is implemented, the Commission will make a concerted effort to work more closely with these groups to improve educational opportunities for all Californians and to ensure that various aspects of the *Public Agenda* are supported by those who can, together with the Commission, ensure their implementation.

Other strategies will include strengthening the Commission's ties with the K-12 community, with the governing bodies of each of the systems of higher education, and with other educational agencies and organizations. In addition, the Commission will continue to explore increased ways to disseminate its products including the expansion of its website, to utilize the expertise and resources that exist with Commission members themselves, and to take full advantage of opportunities that arise.

Maximizing the Commission's effectiveness and impact on educational policymaking in California is a complex undertaking requiring significant time and sustained attention. The Commission will identify organizations, institutions, and associations that may partner with the Commission to advance its *Public Agenda*. The importance of higher education to the future of the State will be heightened, and Commission reports and recommendations will be presented and shared with college and university systems, administrative staff, legislative representatives, and others. Collaboration on achieving improved educational outcomes will be a primary goal of these activities.

1

Growth and Access: Accommodating California's Future Students

Postsecondary education should serve the needs of all Californians, not simply a portion of them. This thematic area recognizes that the State can expect record enrollment demand in its colleges and universities.

THE COMMISSION will continue to emphasize the importance of access to postsecondary education for California's diverse and growing population. Postsecondary education should serve the needs of all Californians, not simply a portion of them. This thematic area recognizes that the State can expect record enrollment demand in its colleges and universities.

However, this growth occurs differentially across the state as do educational opportunities. Focus on this area will make explicit the need not only to find ways to accommodate this growth but also to eliminate disparities in access to postsecondary education across all dimensions of the California's populations, such as race, ethnicity, and place of residence.

In carrying out its planning responsibilities and examining relevant data for higher education in California, the Commission identified growth and access to higher education as one of its top priorities.

Over the past few years, the Commission has analyzed thoroughly a variety of indicators related to growth and access to higher education in California. These indicators have served as the basis for the extensive work in which the Commission has been engaged in these areas. Among the relevant information are the following:

- ◆ Approximately 714,000 additional students are expected to seek enrollment to California's public colleges and universities and up to 65,000 in the independent colleges and university sector between 1998 and 2010.
- ◆ The Commission's regional enrollment study indicates that substantial capacity deficits are anticipated at community colleges in all 11 California regions by 2010 and that capacity deficits are anticipated in nine of the 11 regions for the California State University by the fall of 2004 if the systems' physical plant is not expanded appreciably.
- ◆ The percent of first time full-time freshmen as a percentage of high school graduates varies significantly by region. Orange County is the highest with nearly 65% and the Southern Central Valley region is the region with lowest percentage at less than 40%.

- ♦ Total public higher education headcount enrollment has increased from 1.8 million students in 1989 to 2.4 million in 2000, however, there has been only a fraction of a percent increase in the overall numbers of community college students successfully transferring during that time.

Much of the work in which the Commission is currently engaged addresses the issues of growth and access. One such example is the Commission's enrollment projections through 2010, which serve as a major focal point for planning for higher education.

Below are additional activities that the Commission anticipates undertaking in the future:

- ♦ **College-going rates** - The Commission collects and reports changes in college-going rates among various groups of high school graduates in its *Student Profiles* report -- an abstract of student and institutional outcome data. This effort will analyze trends in college-going behavior and, to the extent possible, the impact of various policy initiatives on the college-going behavior of specific groups of students. Based on this analysis, estimates will be made about the impact that high school graduates will have on demand for college access. Similarly, known historical patterns of college enrollment by adult learners will be analyzed for their contribution to likely demand for postsecondary education enrollment, differentiated by discrete age groups.
- ♦ **Student transfer trends** - Students take various paths to achieve their educational objectives. This activity will take advantage of available data on community college enrollment to describe various paths that students take to achieve their educational objectives, including preparation for transfer and actual movement to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Within data limitations, historical trends in transfer numbers, coupled with student persistence rates in public colleges and universities, will be analyzed for their impact on upper division enrollment demand.
- ♦ **Estimating the State's capacity to accommodate more students** - Each public college and university is constrained in its ability to accommodate student enrollment by its physical master plan and financial resources. Estimating the amount of additional capacity that can be obtained from full build-out and intensive use of existing campuses is essential to assessing the need for new campuses. Additionally, assessing the impact of improved high school preparation, year-round use of facilities, infusion of technology, and shorter paths to degree completion are key components of estimating the additional General Fund support that will be required to sustain maximum access to postsecondary educational opportunities. The Commission will continue to build on its substantial body of work in this area, including *Providing for Progress*, which estimated enrollment demand through 2010,

and develop recommendations for accommodating the projected growth in enrollment demand.

- ♦ **Determining physical plant capacity to accommodate students** - California cannot, nor should it seek to, accommodate all estimated demand for access to postsecondary education within *public* colleges and universities. This effort will seek to determine the physical capacity of public colleges and universities to accommodate students under various scenarios, including intense utilization of campus facilities and technology-mediated instructional delivery. In addition, it will better describe the capacity of independent colleges and universities in California to accommodate enrollment demand and describe the geographic distribution of such capacity throughout the state. Again, this effort will build upon the Postsecondary Education Commission's previous work in this area.
- ♦ **General Fund revenue and expenditures forecasts** – Forecasts of likely revenue generation in the future are critical to estimating the capacity of the State to maintain or expand fiscal support for postsecondary education. This effort will review various revenue forecasts, their underlying assumptions, and the implications for General Fund support of higher education. It will also review workload-generated demand for General Fund expenditures from other areas of the State budget.
- ♦ **Analyzing State bond indebtedness** – Capital outlay expenditures are a major factor in estimating the extent to which California will be able to accommodate the additional students who desire to continue their education beyond high school. The Commission will continue to analyze the California's total debt capacity, current debt levels, and the proportion of total bond indebtedness of the State attributable to higher education.
- ♦ **Facilitating access to teaching and learning through technology** - Many opinions exist regarding the extent to which technology and telecommunications can assist California in sustaining its commitment to broad access to postsecondary education. State policy makers must make choices among the many requests for State support of technology investments submitted by public colleges and universities. This activity will identify and assess funding priorities and the extent to which use of technology and telecommunications can support the efforts of public colleges and universities to accommodate qualified applicants for admission.
- ♦ **Financing the major provisions of the Master Plan** - The capacity of the State policymakers to finance the ideals embodied in the Master Plan has depended, to a large extent, on the particular economic health of California in any given fiscal year and by revenue and expenditure constraints imposed by voters and the State Constitution.

This effort would require the Commission to be more active in assessing the extent to which the Master Plan ideals are being achieved under current funding practices and annually offer its recommendations on the manner in which the state should allocate its investment in postsecondary education.

- ♦ **Encouraging enrollment in independent institutions** - One of the policy objectives of California's Cal Grant Program is to encourage talented students to choose enrollment in independent colleges and universities operating within the state, thereby relieving some access pressures on public colleges and universities. This effort would examine the extent to which State policies adequately address this issue.
- ♦ **Educational equity** - Building upon the Postsecondary Education Commission's past work, the Commission will continue to publish Higher Education Updates and accompanying Fact Sheets to be presented for wide dissemination to policymakers and the general public on the complicated and complex issues of educational equity. In addition, this critical issue will continue to permeate all aspects of the Commission's work. The Commission may consider additional recommendations on this subject.
- ♦ **Financing access for needy students** - Students who have prepared themselves to benefit from instruction in colleges and selective universities should be able to enroll, irrespective of their economic circumstances or the cost of attendance. This effort would describe the full cost of attendance and the level of State investment in each student enrolled in a public institution. Working with the Student Aid Commission, this effort would identify the extent to which student financial aid programs have assisted the state in addressing this need. In addition, the Postsecondary Education Commission would seek to identify remaining financial barriers to college attendance and seek pragmatic solutions to eliminating those barriers.
- ♦ **Long-term student fee policy** - California has been without a long-term student fee policy since 1996. Since then, efforts to enact a new long-term student fee policy have been unsuccessful. The Commission may wish to revisit or reconfirm its adopted fee policy in light of the lack of general support to see it through enactment and to make recommendations to the governor and the Legislature with respect to the need for a student fee policy for California's public colleges and universities.

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2

Preparation for Postsecondary Education

THE COMMISSION'S PUBLIC AGENDA places emphasis on the need to ensure that all Californians are prepared to succeed in the workforce, in postsecondary education, and to pursue lifelong learning. It recognizes that the State should have policies and programs to ensure that all Californians have access to educational opportunity that mitigates differences in background and maximize an individual's ability to realize his or her full potential.

In carrying out its planning responsibilities and examining relevant data for higher education in California, the Commission identified preparation for postsecondary education as one of its top priorities.

The Commission examined a variety of indicators related to the preparation of its residents, particularly high school students, for entrance into and success in college. Taken together, the information presented about how well California students are preparing for college suggests widespread disparities in the State. The Commission concluded that among its top priorities should be a focus on improving the preparation of all students in California for postsecondary education.

Among some of the data illustrating that residents of some regions of California are provided with greater educational opportunities than others are the following.

- ◆ The counties with the highest percentage of their populations with less than a 9th grade education are clustered largely in the Central Valley. Those counties include Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings, Colusa, and Imperial counties.
- ◆ Eight counties (Glenn, Colusa, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Imperial) have populations in which 33% or more of their residents have less than a high school diploma.
- ◆ In seven counties, mostly rural, less than 24% of public high school graduates completed all courses for California State University and University of California entrance in 1990, while in five counties, at least 42% of high school graduates completed these course requirements.
- ◆ In eight counties including Los Angeles and San Francisco, over 25% of Hispanic high school graduates completed all courses required for

University of California and California State University entrance. However, in 12 counties, less than 15% of Hispanic public high school graduates complete University of California and California State University course requirements for entrance in 1990. At least 35% of African-American high school graduates completed high school courses required for entrance into University of California and California State University in Santa Barbara, San Benito, Napa, Glenn, and Lassen counties, but less than 15% of African-American High school graduates completed these same requirements in 17 other counties.

Among the future activities in this area are:

- ♦ **University eligibility of high school graduates** - The Commission periodically estimates the proportion of high school graduates that meet established eligibility requirements for the California State University and the University of California. The last estimate was completed for the class of 1996. The Commission is currently engaged in an eligibility study for the high school graduating class of 2001.
- ♦ **Pre-collegiate outreach and academic development programs** – The State invests millions annually for public colleges and universities to work with students and their parents in middle and high schools in an effort to improve their preparation for successful college enrollment and completion after high school graduation. Success with these efforts will result in larger numbers of students qualified for admission to the California State University or the University of California immediately after high school graduation. This effort will analyze the extent to which California's secondary school students are being served by these programs, and where possible, to which these programs have resulted in improvements in student achievement and college preparation.
- ♦ **Facilitating student transfer** – Successful transfer from a community college to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution can be either more or less difficult, depending on a number of factors including the availability of accurate and timely information to students. This activity will identify the major factors that have an impact on transfer, delineate the mechanisms currently in existence to facilitate successful student transfer, and identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of each approach. It will also identify progress within the California Community Colleges in documenting numbers of students who become "transfer-ready/eligible" each year and any current impediments to successful transition to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.
- ♦ **Monitoring student progression patterns** - California needs to improve its capacity to monitor the paths that students take to complete degree programs and other educational objectives, as well as the amount of time such paths require. The Commission has expended

significant effort in passage and implementation of the State's Comprehensive Student Information and Accountability System (AB 1570). The Postsecondary Education Commission will continue to seek the full cooperation of public, independent, and private colleges and universities to improve and better understand the progression of students through one educational system. In addition, the Commission will work with the K-12 community to align their student data systems with that of the Commission.

- ♦ **Teacher preparation** - The dual impact of burgeoning public school enrollment and class-size reduction has generated a huge demand for new teachers -- a demand as high as 250,000 to 300,000 teachers over the next 10 years by some estimates. In addition, there is a particular need for teacher expertise in mathematics and science, skill areas that are also in demand in the private sector. This Commission activity will seek to describe pre-service, in-service, and professional development for existing teachers to meet future demand for competent teachers in the subject areas in which they are most needed and the ways in which these efforts are responsive to public school needs.
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3

Baccalaureate Degree Production

As the education needs of California's new information-based economy have risen, many believe that California would benefit from more baccalaureate-degree holders.

THE COMMISSION'S PUBLIC AGENDA calls for California to produce more bachelor degree holders. As the education needs of California's new information-based economy have risen, many believe that California would benefit from more baccalaureate-degree holders. The current production of California institutions of higher education is lower than the national average. While California attracts many bachelor degree holders from outside the state who move here to live and work, California may still need more bachelor-degree recipients to support California's economic vitality. The Commission may adopt statewide goals, recommendations, and strategies to raise baccalaureate-degree production to the level of the best performing states or higher. As with the other three thematic areas, it incorporates the elimination of disparities by race/ethnicity, economic means, and region in this regard.

In carrying out its planning responsibilities and examining relevant data for higher education in California, the Commission identified baccalaureate production as one of its top priorities.

The Commission examined a variety of indicators related to educational attainment of its residents. Taken together, the information presented about the level of educational attainment of its residents suggests widespread disparities in California. In addition, the data raise questions about California's level of baccalaureate productivity. Among some of the data examined were the following:

- ◆ The number of baccalaureate degrees awarded per 100 high school graduates in California is approximately 45 and is exceeded by at least seven large states: Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Florida, Washington, Michigan, and Illinois.
- ◆ In California, 28 percent of adults have a baccalaureate degree or higher.
- ◆ California accounts for 12 percent of the U.S. population and 13.6 percent of total U.S. college enrollment (1999).
- ◆ California institutions of higher education award 9.5 percent of the bachelor degrees nationally, 9.4 percent of the masters degrees, 11.7 percent of the doctorate degrees, and 11 percent of professional degrees.

Future activities with respect to this thematic area include plans to update information previously published regarding degrees awarded by disci-

pline and segment, and to link that information to future employment projections. Based on this information, further efforts are planned to investigate the following areas:

- ◆ **California degree production relative to other states** – The Commission will examine information about degree production in other states across the nation. It will examine a variety of pertinent data such as the numbers of baccalaureate degrees awarded in the various other states, the percentage of the population in each state holding baccalaureate degrees, and the degree to which particular states import/export degree holders.
- ◆ **The role transfer plays in the production of the State's baccalaureate degree holders** – The Commission will examine available information about the relationship of transfer and baccalaureate degree production. It will examine and compare, to the extent that data are available, the historical numbers of baccalaureate degrees awarded to transfer students as contrasted with students who begin their academic careers as first-time freshmen in a baccalaureate granting institution. It will explore and examine pertinent data related to the baccalaureate attainment of transfer students and raise relevant policy questions.
- ◆ **Degree production by racial/ethnic group, gender and discipline.** The Postsecondary Education Commission will examine existing data related to the baccalaureate attainment of various racial/ethnic groups and gender to determine whether there continue to be significant achievement gaps that exist.
- ◆ **Degree production by location and discipline (i.e. the regional aspect).** To the extent possible, the Commission will examine regional baccalaureate attainment information and identify existing gaps and disparities. In addition, the Commission will consider regional industry needs where possible as well as baccalaureate production in those related fields at institutions within the region to inform whether or not the regional needs of an area are being adequately addressed by higher education.
- ◆ **Degree production by discipline and employment demand by industry cluster.** There is little evidence that increasing degree production alone does little to assist a state's economy. However, ensuring that sufficient degrees are awarded in particular disciplines required by those industries that fuel a state's economy or that meet critical needs of that state's residents is important. Where possible, the Commission will consider degree production in relation to employment demand data and industry related projections for California.
- ◆ **Degree production vs. skills development.** Questions have been raised about the relevancy and adequacy of academic degrees to the development of skills necessary for individuals to perform well in the workforce. The Postsecondary Education Commission will attempt to

examine data available in this area in light of current demands and realities for human capital and economic development.

- ♦ **The impact of attrition on California's baccalaureate production levels.** The Commission will examine existing data on current retention and persistence at California's public colleges and universities as well as identify barriers to achievement and examine relevant policy issues.
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4

Workforce Preparation/ Economic Development

THE COMMISSION intends to increase its focus on improving the linkages between education and the needs of the new economy. This focus recognizes the growing importance of the need for California's higher education system to integrate workforce competencies in its educational mission for the 21st century.

In carrying out its planning responsibilities and examining relevant data for higher education in California, the Commission identified workforce preparation and economic development as one of its top priorities.

The Postsecondary Education Commission identified a variety of indicators related to the growing importance of the need for students and residents of California to acquire stronger academic skills and increased workforce competencies. In addition, the Commission recognizes the importance of improving adult literacy in California as a necessary component to achieving greater participation by all in the new economy and in higher education. Among the indicators suggesting that improvements need to be made in this area were the following:

- ◆ Thirty percent or more of the residents in six California counties (Colusa, Merced, Tulare, Los Angeles, Imperial, and San Francisco) have Level 1 literacy proficiency.
- ◆ In eight additional California counties, between 25% and 30% of their residents have Level 1 literacy proficiency.
- ◆ In four California counties (Mono, Marin, Placer, and El Dorado) less than 15% of the residents have Level 1 literacy proficiency.

In addition, in examining this area, the Commission recognized the need for improved data to better inform and align California's workforce needs with its educational programs.

Questions that the Commission anticipates addressing include:

- ◆ How responsive is California postsecondary education to future workforce and economic demands?
- ◆ Has the value of an academic degree changed in California's new economy?

- ◆ Are there disparities in the supply and demand of skilled workers necessary to meet the state’s needs in the future? What are they?
- ◆ Are there “roadblocks” or “bottlenecks” to degree production? Where? Why?
- ◆ What are the dynamics of increasing/expanding degree completion requirements?
- ◆ What are the dynamics of increasing/expanding professional licensure requirements?
- ◆ What are the challenges to each public postsecondary system in California?
- ◆ How are each of the public systems of higher education currently responding to workforce demands/projections and what are their plans for the future?

Some of the specific projects aimed at addressing these questions include the following proposed studies:

- ◆ **Workforce productivity planning** - California, like most states, has implemented major changes in workforce preparation and welfare programs. These changes involve postsecondary institutions as integral components of a statewide strategy to train state residents for gainful employment, particularly through the California Community Colleges. State-approved vocational schools also contribute to this undertaking.

An essential dimension of this strategy will be gathering accurate information on workforce needs in a continually changing economic market such that colleges and other training programs produce “completers” with skills that match those required for available jobs. In addition, this effort will identify ways in which private employers can collaborate more effectively with postsecondary educational institutions to assure timely production of program completers to meet the workforce needs of the State and local economies.

- ◆ **Analyzing labor market and economic development needs** – The Commission has representation on the Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division’s (LMID) Advisory Committee. The Commission participation on the LMID Advisory Committee has provided an opportunity to partner with LMID in the potential publishing of an expanded directory of educational opportunities in the future. Future partnerships will focus on data sharing.
- ◆ **Determining the social and economic benefits of postsecondary education** - The Commission has historically supported postsecondary education in terms of a State investment that yields public benefits

to the State rather than as a subsidy to its citizens. However, there are personal benefits as well. This area of study will quantify the economic, social, and political return to the State from its investment in higher education. It will augment this study by identifying ways in which California's colleges and universities can (and should) seek to attract investment and enter into collaborative undertakings with private sector employers.

- ♦ **Review of Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education** – Section 473.3 of the California Business and Professions Code requires that the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committee, in cooperation with the Commission, evaluate and review the effectiveness and efficiency of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education (Department of Consumer Affairs).
 - ♦ **Future Commission involvement** – The Commission will expand its relationships with various State economic development agencies (Trade and Commerce Agency, the Economic Strategy Panel) and pursue partnership opportunities with such agencies (data sharing, research projects). This visibility should also include the higher education community. Each segment is engaged in economic development -- the Commission should have some familiarity with higher education's economic development initiatives.
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Recurring Responsibilities

IN ADDITION TO THE FOUR THEMATIC AREAS identified by the Commission and discussed previously, this section provides a description of the activities in which staff are engaged continuously throughout the year to meet the statutory charge given to the Commission. Illustrations of the Postsecondary Education Commission's ongoing responsibilities are highlighted below.

**Data collection,
reporting,
information
dissemination,
and legislative
requirements**

Section 66903 (g) of the Education Code stipulates that the Commission shall establish and maintain a comprehensive database of information on postsecondary education and assure comparability of data between and among institutions. The code also provides the Commission with the authority to require public colleges and universities to submit data necessary for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities. To enhance the usefulness of the Commission's database, efforts will continue to secure the cooperation of the public education sector -- and that of the independent sector of colleges and universities -- in supplying a common student identifier to student records such that longitudinal analysis can be added to the Commission's work.

In its role as the State's "1202" agency (a federal designation for an agency charged with the responsibility of carrying out a federal program or initiative) -- for purposes of administering federal programs and activities -- the Commission serves as the State coordinator for annual collection of data contained in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) maintained by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). Commission-maintained data and IPEDS data are combined to respond to numerous requests for statewide information on postsecondary education. Much of this data is made available via the Internet on the Commission's home page (<http://www.cpec.ca.gov>) to facilitate more timely updates and broader dissemination to members of the public who have the capability of accessing the Internet.

In addition, Commission staff engage in a number of activities throughout the year that are mandated by statute or which stem from directives of the Legislature, as expressed in resolutions or budget language. These activities do not always result in published reports to the Commission but nonetheless consume staff time and resources.

Specific reports expected from the Commission's efforts in these area include:

- ◆ **Student Profiles** - An annual publication providing summary data on such areas as total postsecondary education enrollment in California,

characteristics of first-time freshman students, characteristics of transfer student, transfer outcomes of community colleges, degrees and certificates awarded, etc.

- ◆ **Fiscal Profiles** - An annual publication providing summary data over time of such areas as total expenditures for postsecondary education by fund source, total student fees, expenditures for instruction, total revenue sources, and “constant dollar” revenue available.
- ◆ **Report on the Fiscal Health of Independent Colleges and Universities** – California Education Code calls upon the Commission to periodically review the financial health of independent colleges and universities in California. This effort would provide updated information to that contained in previous reports on this issue.
- ◆ **The College Guide** - A periodic publication listing every public, independent, and private postsecondary institution authorized to operate in California, demographic information on each institution, and the academic program offerings at each institution.
- ◆ **The Performance of California Public Colleges and Universities** - An annual report containing information on specific student and institutional outcomes prepared in response to Assembly Bill 1808 (Statutes of 1991).
- ◆ **Academic Program Review** – The Commission must review and provide recommendations on all academic proposals for new programs at public colleges and universities. This activity will continue to remain a priority of Commission work.
- ◆ **Reviewing New Campuses and Centers** - The Commission must approve any proposal for a new campus or off-campus center by a public system pursuant to Education Code §66904. Staff plans to work with all three public systems of higher education to determine the most appropriate timetable for the review process.

Governmental and external relations

As an advisor to the governor and Legislature on higher education issues, the Postsecondary Education Commission provides advice on proposed legislation affecting postsecondary education, and participates in the annual budget process as it pertains to higher education.

The Commission also engages in a number of specific budget and legislative activities annually that include:

- ◆ Sponsoring or supporting legislation to advance specific policy recommendations that have been adopted by the Commission such as long-term student fee policies and academic development programs.

- ◆ Providing advice and recommendations to the governor and the Legislature on issues related to budgetary proposals for higher education in California.
- ◆ Preparing and submitting Budget Change Proposals (BCPs) annually to secure fiscal resources needed to implement activities deemed to be of high priority to the Commission (e.g. securing additional staffing to improve long-range planning and statewide coordination activities, expanding and enhancing the Commission's database, maintaining currency in expertise of existing staff.

Specific activities anticipated during the coming year include:

- ◆ **Legislative and Budget Priorities** - An annual statement of priorities presented to the Commission for review and adoption that will guide staff activities for the year during the legislative bill and budget processes.
- ◆ **Legislative and Budget Updates** - A regular update prepared for review and action at regularly scheduled Commission meetings that contains a summary description and analysis of all bills being tracked by staff, official Commission positions, and the bills' current status in the legislative process.
- ◆ **Legislative Profiles** - A customized publication prepared for legislative members containing selected-district based information on educational enrollment, student outcomes, and educational institutions located within the legislative district of each member.
- ◆ **Legislative Handbooks** – A publication prepared for legislative members containing summary information on the postsecondary education enterprise for legislative members assigned to education-related committees.
- ◆ **Federal Update:** a periodic update of federal legislation and regulatory activities that are of interest to the Commission or that focus on key postsecondary education issues.

**Liaisons with
other education
organizations**

In order to be effective in all aspects of its charge, the Commission must monitor and establish positive liaison with other key participants in the higher education policy arena. These include the governing boards of the three public systems of postsecondary education, the Intersegmental Coordinating Committee, academic senates, the Department of Finance, the Legislative Analyst's Office, student advocacy organizations, higher education professional organizations, and a variety of intersegmental advisory and program committees.

To the extent feasible, staff will also remain actively involved in discussions with higher education counterparts in other states, including members of State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), Western

Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Education Commission of the States (ECS), U.S. Department of Education officials, state and national Eisenhower Professional Development Program and National Science Foundation (NSF) Systemic State Initiative coordinators.

**Program
administration**

While the vast majority of the Postsecondary Education Commission's activities are policy-oriented, the Commission has been designated as the State's 1202 agency for purposes of administering federal programs and activities. In this role, Commission staff engage in numerous activities to: (1) monitor changes in federal legislation and regulations that affect administration of various federal programs and activities; (2) monitor and provide periodic reports to Commissioners on federal legislation and budget activity of importance to postsecondary education; and (3) communicate Commission positions on various federal proposals that would have an impact on California's postsecondary education activities and federal program administration. Specific activities and publications associated with this area include:

- ◆ **Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruiting Fund:** Administer the federal Teacher and Principal Quality Training and Recruiting Fund (formerly Eisenhower Professional Development Program). This includes: (1) developing competitive grant application and review processes; (2) distributing federal funds to support improved instruction in public and private schools through in-service development of existing teachers and pre-service training of future teachers; (3) monitoring and evaluating program implementation; and (4) establishing fiscal accounting procedures.
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**Public
communication**

Effective public communication is a high priority for the Commission. To complement its long-range planning and policy analysis, staff increasingly have been involved in efforts to: (1) more broadly disseminate the policy recommendations of the Commission; (2) expand public understanding of postsecondary education policy issues; and (3) generate increased appreciation and support for the contributions of postsecondary education to California.

Specific activities and publications associated with the Postsecondary Education Commission's ongoing work include the following:

- ◆ **Fact Sheets and Higher Education Updates** - Short two-page publications presenting data pertinent to a particular aspect of postsecondary education policy or performance (Fact Sheets) and four-page publications summarizing Commission analysis of discrete aspects of the postsecondary education enterprise (Higher Education Updates). These publications are usually extracted from Commission studies and address significant policy issues and challenges facing California's education system.

- ◆ **Issue Briefs** - Short two-page publications that summarize key policy and/or fiscal issues for postsecondary education and suggest key questions and understandings that should be sought. This publication does not typically incorporate Commission analysis.
- ◆ **Requests for Information** -- Staff will also continue to be engaged in responding to numerous phone inquiries from members of the press, the general public, educators and researchers, and others for background and specific information on postsecondary education activities in California.
- ◆ **Commission Website** – While the Commission continues to utilize traditional means of communicating (publishing hard copy reports and studies), the Commission has strived in recent years to capitalize on the opportunities provided by new technologies in order to reach wider audiences more effectively. The Commission’s technological capacities to collect, store, analyze, and disseminate higher education data in California have improved greatly in recent years and, as a result, have become ever more central to all that the Commission does. The California Postsecondary Education Commission’s website (www.cpec.ca.gov) is perhaps its most important tool in effectively meeting the needs of a broad audience.

The Commission’s website not only serves to provide information on the Commission, its membership, structure, mission, and operations, but it also serves as a portal to a wealth of higher education information.

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The website provides researchers, policymakers, educators, and others interested in higher education issues with access to the Commission’s extensive database of information, higher education statistics, and research studies and policy reports. The website is designed to be as interactive as possible to meet the individual needs of the user and to allow each to generate reports to meet individual needs. The Commission’s own legislative activities, such as its positions on bills can also be found on the site.

For students, their families, members of the general public, and others interested in higher education in California, the Commission’s website provides general knowledge about higher education in California. Those seeking higher education opportunities in California will find that access to the Commission’s *Guide to California’s Colleges and Universities* is among the best resources available on higher education in this state. It is designed to meet the individual needs of the user by allowing one to search for institutions utilizing a number of criteria.

Recognizing its importance, the Commission is continually gathering feedback on how to improve and will continue to make refinements to this valuable tool in order to respond to the needs of those we serve –

the governor, the Legislature, educators, researchers, and members of the general public.

Expanding public communication

Over the years, the communication strategies cited above have been integral to fostering a better understanding of California higher education issues, data related to these issues, the Commission's analyses, and its policy recommendations. Particularly in recent years, the Commission has made a concerted effort to present its work in a variety of ways, formats, and mediums so to be as accessible as possible.

By employing fact sheets, higher education updates, issue briefs, legislative testimony and statements, and the Commission's website, among other forms of information dissemination, will allow the Commission the opportunity to reach broad audiences, to inform them of the issues outlined in the *Public Agenda*, generate a better understanding of these issues, and gain broader support for the Commission's policy recommendations and *Public Agenda*.

These multiple strategies will be central to advancing the Postsecondary Education Commission's *Public Agenda*. The Commission will continue to seek new ways of engaging the broadest possible spectrum of stakeholders, policymakers, educators, business interests, and the general public in order to maximize the impact of the Commission's important work on public policymaking in California and to promote access to quality higher education for all Californians.

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

THE California Postsecondary Education Commission is a citizen board established in 1974 by the Legislature and Office of the Governor to coordinate the efforts of California's colleges and universities and to provide independent, non-partisan policy analysis and recommendations on higher education issues.

Members of the Commission

As of April 2002, the Commissioners representing the general public are:

Alan S. Arkatov, Los Angeles; Chair
Carol Chandler, Selma; Vice Chair
Lance Izumi, Sacramento
Kyo "Paul" Jhin, Malibu
Guillermo Rodriguez, Jr., San Francisco
Evonne Seron Schulze, San Diego
Olivia K. Singh, San Francisco
Howard Welinsky, Burbank
Melinda G. Wilson, Torrance

Representatives of California's education systems are:

Irwin S. Field, Beverly Hills; appointed by the Office of the Governor to represent the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities;

Robert L. Moore, Shadow Hills; appointed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges;

Susan Hammer, San Jose; appointed by the California State Board of Education;

William D. Campbell, Newport Beach; appointed by the Trustees of the California State University; and

Odessa P. Johnson, Modesto; appointed by the Regents of the University of California.

The two student representatives are:

Rachel Shetka, Santa Barbara
Vacant

Of the 16 Commission members, nine represent the general public, with three each appointed for six-year terms by the Office of the Governor, the Senate

Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Five others represent the major systems of postsecondary education in California. Two student members are appointed by the Office of the Governor.

Functions of the Commission

The Commission is charged by the Legislature and the Office of the Governor to "assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary education resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs."

To this end, the Commission conducts independent reviews of matters affecting the 2,600 institutions of postsecondary education in California, including community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and professional and occupational schools.

As an advisory body to the Legislature and Office of the Governor, the Commission performs specific duties of planning, evaluation, and coordination by cooperating with other State agencies and non-governmental groups that perform those other governing, administrative, and assessment functions. The Commission does not govern or administer any institutions, nor does it approve, authorize, or accredit any colleges and universities.

Operation of the Commission

The Commission holds regular public meetings throughout the year at which it discusses and takes action on staff studies and takes positions on proposed legislation affecting education beyond the high school level in California. Requests to speak at a meeting may be made by writing the Commission in advance or by submitting a request before the start of the meeting.

The Commission's day-to-day work is carried out by its staff in Sacramento, under the guidance of Executive Director Warren H. Fox, Ph.D., who is appointed by the Commission.

Further information about the Commission and its publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938; telephone (916) 445-7933; web site www.cpec.ca.gov.

The California Postsecondary Education Commission's Public Agenda: Priorities for Action

Commission Report 02-5



ONE of a series of reports published by the California Postsecondary Education Commission as part of its planning and coordinating responsibilities. Summaries of these reports are available on the Internet at <http://www.cpec.ca.gov>. Single copies may be obtained without charge from the Commission at 1303 J Street, Suite 500, Sacramento, California 95814-2938. Recent reports include:

2001

- 01-2** *Proposed College of the Sequoias Center for Agriculture Science and Technology -- A New Homestead: A Report to the Governor and Legislature in Response to a Request from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges* (April 2001)
- 01-3** *Performance Indicators of California Higher Education, 2000: The Seventh Annual Report to California's Governor, Legislature, and Citizens in Response to Assembly Bill 1808 (Chapter 741, Statutes of 1991)* (April 2001)
- 01-4** *The Condition of Higher Education in California, 2001* (May 2001)
- 01-5** *The Changing Role of Higher Education in Preparing California's Teachers* (May 2001)
- 01-6** *Needs Analysis for the Chaffey Community College District Fontana Center: A Report to the Governor and Legislature in Response to a Request from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges* (July 2001)
- 01-7** *Examining Standardized Testing in the Context of University Admissions* (August 2001)
- 01-7a** *California and Mexico: The Realities and Possibilities for Higher Education* (November 2001)

2002

- 02-1** *Fiscal Profiles, 2001: The Eleventh Annual in a Series of Factbooks About the Financing of California Higher Education* (January 2002)
 - 02-2** *Needs Analysis for the West Hills College at Lemoore, West Hills Community College District: A Report to the Governor and Legislature in Response to a Request from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges* (February 2002)
 - 02-3** *Student Transfer in California Postsecondary Education* (February 2002)
 - 02-4** *California Colleges and Universities, 2002: A Guide to California's Degree-Granting Institutions and to Their Degree, Certificate, and Credential Programs* (April 2002)
 - 02-5** *The California Postsecondary Education Commission's Public Agenda: Priorities for Action* (April 2002)
 - 02-6** *Guidelines for Review of Proposed University Campuses, Community Colleges, and Educational and Joint-Use Centers* (April 2002)
 - 02-7** *Performance Indicators of California Higher Education, 2001: The Eighth Annual Report to California's Governor, Legislature, and Citizens in Response to Assembly Bill 1808 (Chapter 741, Statutes of 1991)* (April 2002)
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